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Occupational Employment and Wages in Oklahoma City, May 2015

Workers in the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$21.29 in May 2015, about 8 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.23, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 19 of the 22 major occupational groups, including computer and mathematical; education, training, and library; and management occupations. Wage levels in the remaining occupational groups were not statistically different from their respective national averages.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 8 of the 22 occupational groups, including construction and extraction; management; and healthcare practitioners and technical. Conversely, nine groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including production; education, training, and library; and personal care and service. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Oklahoma City		United States	Oklahoma City	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾	
Total, all occupations.....	100.0%	100.0%		\$23.23	\$21.29	*	-8
Management.....	5.0	6.2	*	55.30	45.63	*	-17
Business and financial operations.....	5.1	5.0		35.48	30.42	*	-14
Computer and mathematical.....	2.9	2.5	*	41.43	32.03	*	-23
Architecture and engineering.....	1.8	2.1	*	39.89	37.91		-5
Life, physical, and social science.....	0.8	0.8		34.24	29.62	*	-13
Community and social service.....	1.4	1.7	*	22.19	19.02	*	-14
Legal.....	0.8	1.0	*	49.74	40.54	*	-18
Education, training, and library.....	6.2	5.2	*	25.48	20.55	*	-19
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.3	1.1	*	27.39	20.98	*	-23
Healthcare practitioners and technical.....	5.8	6.6	*	37.40	34.47	*	-8
Healthcare support.....	2.9	2.8		14.19	13.41	*	-5
Protective service.....	2.4	2.2	*	21.45	22.06		3
Food preparation and serving related.....	9.1	9.7	*	10.98	10.01	*	-9
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance.....	3.2	2.8	*	13.02	11.38	*	-13
Personal care and service.....	3.1	2.3	*	12.33	10.97	*	-11
Sales and related.....	10.5	10.2		18.90	17.57	*	-7
Office and administrative support.....	15.8	16.3		17.47	16.48	*	-6

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Oklahoma City		United States	Oklahoma City		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Farming, fishing, and forestry.....	0.3	0.1	*	12.67	13.16		4
Construction and extraction.....	4.0	5.3	*	22.88	20.03	*	-12
Installation, maintenance, and repair.....	3.9	4.3	*	22.11	21.06	*	-5
Production.....	6.6	5.3	*	17.41	16.40	*	-6
Transportation and material moving.....	6.9	6.3	*	16.90	16.28	*	-4

⁽¹⁾ A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Oklahoma City is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

Note: * The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group – construction and extraction – was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Oklahoma City had 32,310 jobs in construction and extraction, accounting for 5.3 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 4.0-percent national share. However, the local wage for this occupational group was significantly below the U.S. average. At \$20.03 an hour, the mean wage for Oklahoma City construction and extraction workers was about 12 percent below the \$22.88 national average.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the construction and extraction group included construction laborers (4,220), first-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers (3,310), and plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters (2,460). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers, as well as oil and gas rotary drill operators, with mean hourly wages of \$29.67 and \$27.14, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were pipelayers, plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters' helpers (\$13.53) and carpenters' helpers (\$13.73). (Detailed occupational data for construction and extraction workers are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of all detailed occupations, go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_36420.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Oklahoma City metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the construction and extraction group. For instance, oil and gas derrick operators were employed at 9.3 times the national average in Oklahoma City, and oil and gas rotary drill operators, at 8.8 times the national rate. Both location quotients were among the highest in all metropolitan areas for these particular occupations. On the other hand, construction laborers had a location quotient of 1.1 in Oklahoma City, indicating that this occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission.

Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

With the issuance of data for May 2015, the OES program has incorporated redefined metropolitan area definitions as designated by the Office of Management and Budget. OES data are available for 394 metropolitan areas, 38 metropolitan divisions, and 167 OES-defined nonmetropolitan areas. A listing of the areas and their definitions can be found at www.bls.gov/oes/current/msa_def.htm.

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES program produces employment and wage estimates for over 800 occupations for all industries combined in the nation; the 50 states and the District of Columbia; 432 metropolitan areas and divisions; 167 nonmetropolitan areas; and Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. National estimates are also available by industry for NAICS sectors, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industries, and by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm.

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year. May 2015 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2015, November 2014, May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, and November 2012. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 73.5 percent based on establishments and 69.6 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.9 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Statistical Area included 4,064 establishments with a response rate of 76 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The May 2015 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Metropolitan area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Oklahoma City Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Canadian, Cleveland, Grady, Lincoln, Logan, McClain, and Oklahoma Counties in Oklahoma.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southwest. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Oklahoma City Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2015

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Construction and extraction occupations.....	32,310	1.3	\$20.03	\$41,670
First-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers.....	3,310	1.5	29.67	61,710
Brickmasons and blockmasons.....	310	1.2	20.86	43,400
Carpenters.....	2,010	0.7	18.16	37,780
Carpet installers.....	(5)	(5)	13.91	28,940
Floor layers, except carpet, wood, and hard tiles.....	70	1.6	19.44	40,430
Tile and marble setters.....	(5)	(5)	13.78	28,650
Cement masons and concrete finishers.....	1,060	1.5	15.10	31,400
Construction laborers.....	4,220	1.1	14.10	29,320
Paving, surfacing, and tamping equipment operators.....	290	1.2	18.14	37,730
Operating engineers and other construction equipment operators.....	1,800	1.2	18.81	39,120
Drywall and ceiling tile installers.....	270	0.7	17.62	36,640
Electricians.....	2,210	0.8	21.55	44,810
Glaziers.....	120	0.6	15.48	32,200
Insulation workers, floor, ceiling, and wall.....	290	2.6	17.40	36,180
Insulation workers, mechanical.....	150	1.2	23.13	48,110
Painters, construction and maintenance.....	1,050	1.1	18.56	38,610
Pipelayers.....	240	1.3	16.16	33,610
Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters.....	2,460	1.4	23.05	47,950
Reinforcing iron and rebar workers.....	100	1.1	15.68	32,620
Roofers.....	750	1.5	15.22	31,650
Sheet metal workers.....	2,310	3.9	24.06	50,040
Structural iron and steel workers.....	110	0.4	13.55	28,180
Helpers-brickmasons, blockmasons, stonemasons, & tile & marble setters.....	(5)	(5)	13.32	27,710
Helpers-carpenters.....	350	2.1	13.73	28,560
Helpers-electricians.....	750	2.4	15.45	32,140
Helpers-pipelayers, plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters.....	730	3.0	13.53	28,140
Helpers-roofers.....	50	1.1	14.89	30,960
Construction and building inspectors.....	440	1.1	22.90	47,630
Hazardous materials removal workers.....	100	0.5	17.81	37,040
Highway maintenance workers.....	480	0.8	16.20	33,690
Septic tank servicers and sewer pipe cleaners.....	270	2.3	16.73	34,800
Derrick operators, oil and gas.....	800	9.3	23.63	49,160
Rotary drill operators, oil and gas.....	970	8.8	27.14	56,450
Service unit operators, oil, gas, and mining.....	1,290	4.8	21.17	44,040
Earth drillers, except oil and gas.....	190	2.2	20.01	41,630
Roustabouts, oil and gas.....	1,870	5.9	18.79	39,090
Helpers-extraction workers.....	270	2.7	17.54	36,490

⁽¹⁾ For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Oklahoma City MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_36420.htm.

⁽²⁾ Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

⁽³⁾ The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

⁽⁴⁾ Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a "year-round, full-time" hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

⁽⁵⁾ Estimates not released.